

Perelman's Pocket Cyclopedia of Cigars 2010

INTRODUCTION

What recession?

Despite the economic downtown of 2008-09, there are more cigar brands on the U.S. market than at anytime since the Cigar Boom, and for years before. Who would have predicted that?

The number of brands covered rose for the fifth straight edition, by 8.3% to 1,473. That's after receding in five consecutive editions from 2000 through 2004. Over the last five years, the total rose from 1,002 to 1,091 to 1,233 to 1,305 to 1,360 and now, 1,473, the most ever. The old high of 1,448 came in 1999.

Here are a few tips to help users of this book, to make your exploration and research efforts more fun:

About this book:

We have provided critical details on a lot of cigars. A total of 1,473 brands are profiled, comprising more than 7,500 models. That's a lot more than the 370 in our inaugural edition in 1995.

We note that our listing represents virtually every brand *marketed* nationally. Readers will find some brands which are not listed here, but which are available at his or her local smokeshop. These brands are very likely:

- ▶ Private label or unbranded cigars offered by major manufacturers, on which store names are placed for local sale;
- ▶ House brands produced for individual cigar lounges, mail-order/on-line houses or retailers, which are not available at wholesale for national distribution to tobacco stores;
- ▶ Cigars produced by small, local factories and marketed regionally, or brands which are still *available* nationally, but without any active marketing effort behind them;
- ▶ Cigar brands without a U.S. distributor, which may have been imported directly from outside the country;
- ▶ New lines introduced after this book was completed;
- ▶ Close-outs (still widely sold!) or discontinued brands no longer produced or available from manufacturers.

This should not dissuade readers from trying or enjoying these cigars. We actively encourage everyone to try new cigars and refrain from the kind of "cigar snobbery" which is so easy for premium cigar smokers to fall into. ***The best cigar you will ever smoke might be the next one you try.***

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Readers looking for details on these brands may wish to consult our previous editions, which covered many brands now out of production. Please visit our *CigarCyclopedia.com* web site if you wish to purchase back issues of our *Perelman's Pocket Cyclopedia of Cigars*.

About the brands:

We have tried to list, for each handmade brand, the country of origin of the wrapper, filler and binder. While we have received wonderful cooperation from the manufacturers and distributors, more than one executive has told us something like, "This is what we would like to use, but if we can't get it, we will blend in something else."

In most cases, this should *not* be of great concern. After all, most consumers buy specific cigars based on an expectation of taste and draw, not on the ingredients. Recent history shows that master blenders have little difficulty re-configuring brands with different tobaccos to achieve the same taste and quality of construction.

About the shapes:

The major trends in brands and shapes for 2009 again showed (1) fewer shapes in most brands, concentrated on bigger ring gauges. (2) more strongly-flavored blends and (3) more consumer-friendly packaging. The clearest trends are for:

- ▶ Continued introduction of new lines which are extensions of well-known brands, giving the new blends a major marketing advantage;
- ▶ More big-ring cigars with 60-ring shapes now quite common, although the long panatela (also known as Lancero) continues its remarkable comeback;
- ▶ New packaging not only offering the smoker their favorite brands in packs of 3, 4, 5 or 10, but also sampler packs of brands with a range of sizes in a single box. For so many smokers who enjoy a variety of brands, this is a welcome (and cost-saving) development indeed!

A list of the brands which feature extra large, extra long or striped-wrapper cigars is listed in section 2.04.

Cuban cigars:

Because of our concentration on cigars available in the U.S., listings of cigars produced in Cuba are not included. Please see our companion volume, *Perelman's Pocket Cyclopedia of Havana Cigars (3rd edition)*, available through your local tobacconist or by writing to us directly.

The future:

Cigar sales in the U.S. were down in 2008 and steady in 2009 due to the economy and the lack of places to smoke outside of the home. ***Smokers must now fight for their opportunities to enjoy cigars, including lobbying their local city and county officials.*** And the prospect of increased taxes is always at hand with governments unable (or unwilling) to balance their budgets. Although cigars produced today are as good as any ever made, it is harder and harder to find a place and a time to enjoy them.

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With our thanks:

This book could not have been produced without a tremendous amount of help from many people in and around the cigar industry. Representatives of most every manufacturer and distributor in the country endured many telephone calls requesting information, and virtually everyone we contacted was not only forthcoming, but enthusiastic.

Special thanks to assistant editor Steve Harris, marketing director Pat Harris and Chromatic Lithographers of Glendale, California for their effort in printing. Without them, this book could not have been produced.

We're always happy to hear from you; you can contact us through *CigarCyclopedia.com* or via electronic mail at editor@CigarCyclopedia.com. I hope to see you in a smoke-filled room soon!



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